



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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SACHI A. HAMAI
Interim Chief Executive Officer

March 5, 2015

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Sachi A. Hamai
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
HILDA L. SOLIS
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

REPORT BACK ON THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS AND THE PUBLIC'S ABILITY TO ACCESS THE COUNTY'S VENDOR SITE (ITEM 14, AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 17, 2015)

On February 17, 2015, the Board instructed the Interim Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Internal Services to review the Request for Proposal process and report back to the Board, and instructed the Interim Chief Executive Officer to report back to the Board on the public's ability to access the County's vendor site.

Overview

Board Policy and County Bid Website

Consistent with Board Policy No. 5.020, Reporting Requirement for Bids/Contracts Over \$10,000, County departments are required to publicly advertise solicitations for goods and/or services on the County's Bid Website that are expected to exceed \$10,000 in value.

Access to the bid website is available on the worldwide web through the County's home page, at the "Business," then "Doing Business with Us" link, as well as through various County department website links.

Implemented in 2001, the bid website is a browser-based, web-enabled application that provides vendors with online access to solicitation and award information posted by County departments.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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Bid website features and benefits include:

- Categories for searching solicitations include solicitation number, title, and department, as well as by commodity or service, and the ability to generate a bid list of vendors by commodity or service category.
- Solicitation and award information includes, but is not limited to, the solicitation number, open and close date, awarded vendor, and contact information for the solicitation.
- Access to the current database of vendors registered from the County's online registration system.
- Intuitive screens and navigation developed to assist County departments when posting their solicitation and award information, and to vendors for accessing it.
- Any vendor has online access to review, download and print, and to respond to any County departmental solicitation.
- Registered vendors are notified via email whenever a solicitation is posted on the website for the commodities and/or services for which they have registered.
- Enforces standards for County departments in the acquisition process for commodities, services and vendors.
- Source of commodity, services and vendor information is online and subject to review at any time by the vendor community or the public.

Online Vendor Registration System (WebVen)

Access to WebVen is also available on the worldwide web through the County's home page, at the "Business," then "Doing Business with Us" link, as well as through various County Department website links.

WebVen provides vendors with the ability to register their respective businesses online, identifying the commodities and/or services that they provide through industry standard commodity code structure by description, and provide their email contact information. To date, there are more than 68,000 vendors that are registered in WebVen to do business with the County.

Whenever a solicitation is posted on the bid website for commodities and/or services, WebVen generates an automated email message to all vendors that have registered for those commodities and/or services.

The email message notifies the vendors that a County solicitation has been posted on the bid website for the commodities or services in which they had registered, and provides a link to the website.

The notification process is dependent upon vendors keeping their contact information updated, simply because the County would not know if a vendor representative changed his/her email, was reassigned, or if another representative of the company was assigned to County, etc.

Registrar Recorder-County Clerk (RR-CC) Solicitation

The RR-CC solicitation, an Invitation For Bid (IFB), was posted on the bid website on August 19, 2014, and closed on September 26, 2014, which indicates that the solicitation was publicly advertised every day for more than a month. As such, any vendor or interested party had the ability to access, view, download and print, and respond to the solicitation during this period.

The WebVen system generated email message was sent to approximately 485 registered email contact addresses in the following commodity codes by description:

- 31067 - Envelopes, Shipping and Mailing
- 57835 - Election Equipment and Supplies
- 60071 - Mailing, Packaging and Shipping Machines (including Packaging Material Dispensing Machines)
- 91528 - Electronic Information and Mailing Services
- 91558 - Mailing Services (including Collating, Packaging, and Sorting)
- 91559 - Mail Services, Express
- 98554 - Mailing Equipment Rental or Lease – including Postage Meter

Reported Vendor Relations Issue

It was reported that a registered vendor experienced issues with: 1) her Vendor Relations password expiring; 2) logging into the Vendor Relations mail to see if a bid had been posted-mailbox was full; and 3) getting voice mail when she called the vendor relations contact numbers listed.

The vendor was subsequently contacted to clarify the above reported problems that she had experienced with Vendor Relations. The vendor stated that she was attempting to log into Vendor Self-Service (VSS) to update her Vendor Profile, but had an expired password. She indicated that she did attempt to contact our Vendor Relations unit via telephone to no avail (the voicemail box was full). In researching the issues, we discovered a technical issue with the three Vendor Relations telephone numbers. This issue was addressed and resolved with AT&T on February 19, 2015, and the vendor has since been assisted with adjusting her VSS Vendor Profile.

This vendor also advised that she did not experience a problem with the Vendor Relations email box (i.e., she did not send a message via email to Vendor Relations). Please note that the

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Vendor Profile in VSS does not prevent or other disadvantage anyone from accessing, reviewing, download, printing or submitting a bid to solicitation posted on the bid webpage. Also, at no time was this vendor disadvantaged from seeing or responding to this solicitation.

Follow-up Actions

As a follow-up to ensure that the notification process is strengthened, and that the RR-CC can move forward with re-soliciting with a projected March 17, 2015 IFB release date, the following actions have been taken:

- An email message blast has been sent to all WebVen vendors to re-emphasize their responsibility and the need to ensure that their company contact information is accurate, to include personnel and email addresses for their representatives; and to ensure that County email notifications are not labeled or diverted to SPAM by their respective email carrier. We will build this into an annual notification to the WebVen vendor population.
- A system report has been generated of the 137 undelivered emails in the previous IFB notification, and Vendor Relations is following-up with the vendor contacts, where possible, to reconcile inaccurate contact information.
- Efforts are underway to explore automatic email receipt acknowledgment, that does not prompt, or require an action by the receiver.
- We will also be looking at leveraging social media (e.g., Twitter, etc.) to expand the solicitation notification process.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Jim Jones of my staff at (213) 974-8355, or Dave Chittenden of ISD at (323) 267-2103.

SAH:JJ:DC
GS:ef

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Internal Services
Registrar-Recorder County Clerk